

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-02

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O R 080745Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6772

INFO USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 1838

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR IN PK US

SUBJECT: INDIAN PRESS REPORTING ON US ARMS SUPPLY POLICY

REF: NEW DELHI 1833

1. NEW DELHI PRESS STORIES FEBRUARY 8 ON BHUTTO'S TRIP AND US ARMS POLICY LED VARIOUSLY WITH BHUTTO'S BANQUET REMARK "US ARMS NOT TO AFFECT INDO-PAK TIES" -- TIMES OF INDIA; "USA AND PAKISTAN TO STRENGTHEN TIES" -- THE STATESMAN; "BHUTTO CONCLUDED USEFUL TOUR" -- PATRIOT; AND "US YET TO TAKE FINAL DECISION ON LIFTING ARMS EMBARGO" -- INDIAN EXPRESS AND HINDUSTAN TIMES.

2. REPLYING ON AP REUTERS AND PTI WIRE STORIES, MOST PAPERS NOTED POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES IN GETTING CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR A CHANGE IN ARMS POLICY. CONG LESTER WOLFE IS QUOTED AS EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE TRANSFER OF WEAPONS TO THE PLO. SEN MCGOVERN AND SEN CHURCH ARE ALSO SAID TO BE OPPOSED TO A CHANGE IN POLICY AND PTI ASSERTS THAT "BHUTTO'S TALKS WITH MEMBERS OF THE TWO CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAVE NOT CONVERTED LEGISLATORS. MAJORITY ARE AVERSE TO MILITARY ASSISTANCE OF ANY  
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KIND TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ISRAEL."

WIRE SERVICE REPORTS CITE CONGS BROOMFIELD AND ZABLOCKI, HOWEVER, AS EXAMPLES OF REPRESENTATIVES WHO SUPPORT ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN.

3. MEMBERS OF BHUTTO'S ENTOURAGE ARE SAID TO EXPECT THE EMBARGO TO BE LIFTED WITHIN A MATTER OF WEEKS AND A "SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN" IS CITED AS SAYING A DECISION WOULD BE REACHED IN THE NEXT TWO-THREE WEEKS. PTI'S REPORT SAYS US ARMS SALES MAY BE LIMITED TO ANTI-TANK AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES INITIALLY AND ALSO REFERS TO US PRESS STORIES THAT LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO MAY BE LINKED TO PAK RENUNCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ALTHOUGH, INFORMED SOURCES ARE CITED AS SAYING, NO CATEGORICAL STATEMENT TO THAT EFFECT HAS BEEN MADE BY BHUTTO.

4. TIMES OF INDIA IS THE ONLY PAPER TO CARRY A REUTERS STORY THAT STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SAID INDIA HAD NOT SENT ANY COMPLAINT IN RECENT DAYS TO THE US ON THE ARMS EMBARGO ISSUE ALTHOUGH IT HAD PREVIOUSLY MADE ITS OPPOSITION TO RESUMPTION OF ARMS SALES WELL KNOWN. AN INDIAN EXPRESS EXCLUSIVE STORY DATED NEW DELHI SAYS THAT IN RECENT DAYS THE GOI HAD FULLY MADE ITS VIEWS KNOWN TO THE US ON THE "DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES" OF LIFTING THE EMBARGO. A LETTER FROM FONMIN CHAVAN TO SECRETARY KISSINGER IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN SENT AT THE BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY SETTING FORTH THE INDIAN POSITION THAT A CHANGE IN US POLICY WOULD REVIVE TENSION IN THE SUBCONTINENT AND, SET BACK THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION. CHAVAN IS SAID TO HAVE WELCOMED US SUPPORT FOR THE SIMLA AGREEMENT AND ITS ASSURANCES IT WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN AN ARMS RACE IN THE AREA. INDIA WAS SINCERE IN TRYING TO BUILD INDO-US RELATIONS ON A MATURE AND CONSTRUCTIVE BASIS BUT "INDIAN PARLIAMENTARY AND PUBLIC OPINION WAS BOUND TO REACT STRONGLY TO RENEWAL OF ARMS SUPPLIES TO PAKISTAN WHICH WOULD BE CONSIDERED THE REVIVAL OF OLD AND DISCREDITED POLICIES."

5. THERE WERE ONLY TWO EDITORIAL COMMENTS. THE PATRIOT ARGUED THAT "PAKISTAN IS BEING REARMED TO ITS MAXIMUM CAPACITY BECAUSE THE USA CANNOT TOLERATE ANY DEGREE OF STABILITY IN SOUTH ASIA AND IT SEES IN PAKISTAN THE PERFECT

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STOOGE THAT WILL FIT THIS (DESTABILIZING) STRATEGY." THE INDIAN EXPRESS SAYS THAT ASSURANCES THAT ARMS SUPPLIES WILL NOT CONTRIBUTE TO AN ARMS RACE OR ALTER THE STRATEGIC BALANCE ARE "MEANINGLESS". "IT WILL BE FOOLISH FOR INDIA TO COUNT ON MR. BHUTTO TO CURB HIS GREED FOREVER OR ON WASHINGTON TO CIRCUMSCRIBE ITS GENEROSITY TOWARDS AN ALLY WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THE ADVERTISED GUIDELINES." "FRESH DOUBT IS BOUND TO BE CASE ON US INTENTIONS IN THIS PART OF

THE WORLD WHEN INDIA, AT ANY RATE, WAS PREPARED TO FORGET THE  
PRONOUNCED AMERICAN TILT TOWARDS PAKISTAN IN THE  
PAST AND TO REBUILD ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US ON A NEW  
BASIS OF MUTUAL SELF-INTEREST." "THE LEAST WASHINGTON  
MAY HAVE BEEN EXPECTED TO DO WAS TO WAIT FOR THE  
COMPLETION OF THE SIMLA PROCESS BEFORE CONSIDERING A CHANGE  
IN ITS POLICY OF ARMS SHIPMENTS TO PAKISTAN. THERE HAVE  
BEEN SIGNS ALREADY OF A HARDENING OF MR. BHUTTO'S ATTITUDE  
TO NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH INDIA IN HIS RECENT REFERENCES  
TO INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS IN KASHMIR. A TRAGIC VIEW  
OF THE SITUATION MUST BE RESISTED, AND EFFORTS TO SEEK  
NORMALIZATION WILL NO DOUBT CONTINUE ON INDIA'S  
PART. IF THEY SUCCEED, NO THANKS WILL BE DUE TO WASHINGTON."  
SCHNEIDER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, LEGISLATORS, ARMS, EMBARGOES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 08 FEB 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
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**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Reference:** 75 NEW DELHI 1833  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ElyME  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 22 SEP 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <22 SEP 2003 by RowellE0>; APPROVED <31 DEC 2003 by ElyME>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** INDIAN PRESS REPORTING ON US ARMS SUPPLY POLICY  
**TAGS:** PFOR, IN, PK, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006